

I am writing to ask for your assistance in putting an end to the practice of phone companies imposing misleading charges on my monthly phone bill. This would allow me to accurately compare prices of phone services. I support the petition filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates and endorsed by other consumer advocacy organizations, including Consumers Union. This petition, CG Docket No. 04-208, Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Truth-In-Billing and Billing Format, should be granted. I believe I am not alone...as I believe many people are annoyed with a long list of new charges and frustrated with trying to compare prices when shopping for telecommunications service. Phone bills should be truthful, easy to read and easy to understand. Instead, the long distance and wireless bills are filled with surcharges with misleading names that imply the line items are mandated by law, when they are not. This is not consumer-friendly! Because this practice is permitted by the FCC, long distance and wireless phone companies are able to hide the true cost of service. These add-ons make the real price of service significantly more than advertised. Competition will only work if consumers are able to accurately compare prices. The FCC should immediately grant the NASUCA petition to investigate carrier practices related to line item charges on bills for wireline and wireless phone service; to declare certain practices in violation of the Commission's "Truth in Billing" Order and to prohibit carriers from imposing separate monthly fees, line items or surcharges unless expressly mandated by law or the charge is expressly authorized by a governmental authority.